

**Mid-Term Review**

**Zimbabwe AIDS Policy and Advocacy  
(ZAPA) Project**

**USAID/Zimbabwe and The Futures Group International**

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## Acknowledgements

The four members of the ZAPA Project Mid-Term Review Team would like to thank all those people who so generously gave up precious time to assist the Team through their participation in one-on-one interviews, meetings and group discussions. Their willingness to provide constructive comments, special insights, and recommendations made the entire review process a very positive and, hopefully, productive experience for all those involved.

The Team was very pleased with USAID's and the Futures Group's collaborative intention of this limited three-week exercise, i.e., not to conduct an "evaluation" *per se* but rather a "review" that served as a means to take stock midway through the Project's planned life, identify areas that require strengthening or refocusing, and provide guidance for any appropriate mid-course changes. It is the Team's sincere hope that this document has achieved those intended ends.

Anecdotally, the Review Team wants to acknowledge the extensive review, questions, comments and additional information provided by members of USAID/Zimbabwe and the Futures team. While the Review Team has tried to answer those questions and incorporate suggested changes, it would also like to highlight the fact that the Team had only three weeks to conduct the entire Mid-Term Review, which included very extensive and diverse interviews, and worked within a suggested 25-page report limitation. The Review Team compliments the Futures team for having taken the significant extra time to expand upon many of the points and issues that were raised by the Team – the Futures team's work will serve as an excellent addendum to this report.

## **List of Acronyms**

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ARV	Antiretroviral
COP	Chief of Party
CSO	Civil society organization
CSP	Country Strategic Plan (USAID)
CTO	Cognizant Technical Officer (USAID)
DAC	District AIDS Committee
FBO	Faith-based organizations
FGD	Focus group discussion
FY	Fiscal year
GOZ	Government of Zimbabwe
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IBM	International Business Machines
IR	Intermediate Result (USAID)
MP	Member of Parliament
NAC	National AIDS Council (GOZ)
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NPA	National Plan of Action (GOZ)
OD	Organizational development
OVC	Orphans and vulnerable children (NPA for OVC; GOZ)
PCT	Parent to child transmission
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan (USAID)
RCO	Regional Contracting Officer (USAID)
RFA	Request for Application
SO	Strategic Objective (USAID)
SOW	Scope of work
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
VCT	Voluntary counseling and testing
ZAPA	Zimbabwe AIDS Policy and Advocacy (the Project)

## **I. Executive Summary**

The Zimbabwe AIDS Policy and Advocacy (ZAPA) Project is being implemented by The Futures Group to help mitigate the expanding HIV and AIDS epidemic in Zimbabwe through an array of advocacy-related activities to foster an enabling and supportive policy environment geared toward the elimination of the epidemic. While there are a number of HIV and AIDS policies in place – and more could be done to enhance those policies – the full implementation and support of those policies is urgently needed to encourage Zimbabweans to respond more effectively to the challenge of AIDS. Real and lasting behavioral change simply has to occur, and the nation needs the right environment and collective national and individual commitment to achieve that end.

Since its commencement in February 2002, the four-year ZAPA Project has undertaken a number of initiatives through the provision of technical assistance, training, equipment, and direct grants to civil society organizations (CSOs). At this approximate mid-way point, there have been significant achievements on a number of fronts: 1) the Project provided grants to 22 CSOs over a 12-15 month period for advocating diverse HIV and AIDS issues including the promotion of civil rights for people living with the disease, children's rights, women's and girl's reproductive health rights, promotion of male responsibility, and implementation and mainstreaming of the National AIDS Policy among NGOs; 2) the co-sponsoring and support leading up to the promulgation of the National Plan of Action for Orphans and Vulnerable Children; 3) the support for the heightened prominence of faith-based organizations' expansion of effective HIV and AIDS prevention and control initiatives; and 4) the spirit of an advocacy network among partners and stakeholders. *"This is a pioneering project; we have been 'hacking' through the bush to make a path...in HIV and AIDS policy and advocacy in Zimbabwe"* (Project Chief of Party).

Nonetheless, as with any groundbreaking, policy-oriented program, the Futures and USAID teams determined that there was a need to undertake a mid-term review of the Project to assess its status against planned targets, and determine any mid-course corrections to ensure that the Project objectives are achieved to the fullest extent possible. Consequently, a four-person team was assembled in June 2004 to carry out a very collaborative, constructive and forward-looking review. As evidenced herein, hopefully, the focus of the Review Team was to seek a diverse group's opinion of the Project, its goals, its achievements, and its needed adjustments – from the perspective of the USAID HIV and AIDS team, the Futures team, the partners, and the other stakeholders.

The results of the Review Team's findings are significant. Indeed, major mid-course corrections are needed, and USAID and The Futures Group should take substantive, near- and medium-term actions. As summarized in Annex 7 and detailed throughout this review, there are a number of significant recommendations: 1) defer on major new initiatives until after the revision of Futures' strategic plan; 2) hold extensive consultative meetings with partners and stakeholders; 3) rewrite Futures' staff job descriptions; 4) evolve the Futures team from program implementers to advisors and facilitators; 5) based on the new strategic direction of ZAPA, revise focus of and selection criteria for the second round of CSO grants; 6) revise the grants management system; 7) undertake high priority special studies based on revised strategy; 8) increase and strengthen

CSO and public sector partnerships; 9) examine and revise advocacy capacity-building approach; and 10) proceed as quickly as possible to the next Chimusoro Awards ceremony.

The early stage of these corrective efforts will coincide with the just-announced conclusion of the Futures' Chief of Party services by the end of September 2004. Consequently, with the current estimated contract completion date of February 20, 2006, both parties must immediately consider the employment of a new COP in the context of a program that would only have approximately 17 months remaining. Therefore, it is the Review Team's major recommendation that the suggested adjustments and revised strategic focus contained herein occur within an extended Futures contract to August 20, 2006, i.e., an additional six months, which is the longest extension possible under the terms of the contract.

## **II. Background**

### **A. Project Review Rationale**

The Zimbabwe AIDS Policy and Advocacy Project (hereinafter "the ZAPA Project" or "the Project") officially began on February 21, 2002 with the signing by the Regional Contracting Officer (RCO/Botswana) of a four-year, \$5.3 million contract with The Futures Group International ("Futures"). While the Futures' Chief of Party did not join the ZAPA Project until early November 2002, the Project still began immediately after the contract signing with the organizational and planning efforts of the three senior Zimbabwean staff – the Senior HIV/AIDS Policy Specialist, the Grants Management Specialist, and the Civil Society Specialist. With the estimated completion date of four years from the date of the contract signing, it means that 58% of the anticipated Project life has already elapsed.

During that time, however, the environment in which the Project is operating has changed dramatically within both Zimbabwe and USAID (see the ZAPA Context discussion below). Consequently, at this approximate mid-point of the Project's life, USAID/Zimbabwe, in concert with Futures team, determined that this mid-term review should be conducted. The expectation is to have the Futures team, USAID's HIV and AIDS Strategic Objective (SO) team, and key stakeholders utilize the results of this review "...to develop a clearer framework for meeting the broad HIV and AIDS policy and advocacy needs in Zimbabwe." Given the extraordinary changes that have occurred over the two plus years of implementation, this is an excellent opportunity for all parties to implement appropriate mid-course adjustments and contemplate additional future actions, as recommended herein. Therefore, it is the hope of the Mid-Term Review Team that this document will ultimately serve as the basis for enhancing the performance of the ZAPA Project and, in turn, the impact that it is having on the HIV and AIDS epidemic in Zimbabwe.

### **B. Statement of Work**

The primary focus of this review is to assess the performance of the Project and the Futures team so that specific activities, areas of concentration, etc. can be adjusted, if need be, in a timely fashion so that real change can be effected (e.g., within future recipient civil society organizations [CSOs] and the proposed network) prior to the anticipated conclusion of the ZAPA Project on February 20, 2006. As detailed within the Review Team's Statement of Work, the review was specifically focused on providing:

- An assessment of the current status and relevance of the ZAPA Project;

- An assessment of the relevance of the Project in meeting the need for developing policies and guidelines for HIV and AIDS mitigation;
- An assessment and examination of the capacity and ability of the Project's organizational structure to implement the planned activities, and to adjust to achieve the goals of the Project; and
- Clear, actionable recommendations on how to better plan and implement current and future HIV and AIDS policy and advocacy interventions.

To undertake the review and achieve these intended results, the HIV and AIDS Strategic Objective (SO) team, in collaboration with Futures, designed the SOW and recruited the four-person Project Review Team comprised of the following individuals and associated skill areas:

- Steve Norton, Team Leader (USAID funded)
- Lynne Cogswell, Organizational Development (OD) Specialist (USAID funded)
- Naira Khan, Policy Specialist (locally hired by Futures)
- Joyce Siveregi, Advocacy Specialist (locally hired by Futures)

### **C. Review Team Methodology**

Following introductory meetings on June 7-8 with the USAID and Futures teams, and based on Review Team composite and individual SOWs, the Team developed and submitted a detailed Action Plan for the review. The initial focus of the Team's efforts was placed on interviewing at least 60% of the Project's partners and key stakeholders, in accordance with section D of the Team's SOW. The OD Specialist interviewed, by phone or in person, all members of the ZAPA staff, four USAID representatives, two Futures U.S. staff, and 9 out of the 22 CSO finance staff. The Review Team's Policy and Advocacy Specialists interviewed, by phone or in person, 14 out of the 22 CSO advocacy staff and executive directors and 9 members of staff from key stakeholders. Furthermore, the Team Leader independently interviewed USAID's principal SO Team members as well as the Futures Chief of Party. (See Annex 1 for a complete list of all interviewed organizations.)

A comprehensive sampling was developed prior to the start of interviews. The Review Team chose CSO partners based on thematic areas, advocacy staff size, baseline-established advocacy capacity, and grant award amounts; resulting in the final selection of 14 out of the 22 CSOs which received the first set of one-year grants. The Team chose to interview all 9 key individuals from the public and private sectors and the media. Furthermore, they randomly selected 11 staff from other stakeholders – 8 from international organizations, 2 from faith-based organizations, and 1 from an HIV/AIDS activist group – to participate in a focus group discussion (FGD). In this way, the Team was able to gather information, perceptions, and opinions from a solid cross section of those involved, either directly or indirectly, in the Project.

In addition to the qualitative assessments used, the Team also employed quantitative tools to gather data on the fourth Review Objective, i.e. ZAPA Management and Organizational Structure. Lastly, all Team members reviewed appropriate and useful Project documents (see Annex 2) to corroborate the qualitative and quantitative findings gathered, and to clearly and thoroughly establish the context within which the Project is being/has been implemented (see Annex 3, Review Protocol, for further details on data sources, methodologies, and analysis process used by the Team).

### **III. Review Objectives**

#### **A. ZAPA Project Context**

The Review Team was asked to “...examine the rapidly changing environment in which the ZAPA Project is being implemented and discuss its impact on the Project’s goals, objectives and implementation”. To do so required a review of a number of fairly recent documents as well as discussions with knowledgeable staff of USAID and Futures.

Before discussing the micro-/Project-level impacts of the Zimbabwean and USAID environments on the past and future performance of the Project, it is essential to briefly portray the macro environment as it casts the overall setting for the Project. Summarizing from The Economist Intelligence Unit’s April 2004 Country Report on Zimbabwe:

Domestic Political World: Overshadowing all that goes on in Zimbabwe is the continuing tense political situation. The favored political strategy of the President and ruling party appears to remain in place: they are largely ignoring world opinion, continuing to clamp down on the opposition, and using the considerable array of repressive legislation to ensure that the party will have a significant political advantage at the next parliamentary elections, scheduled for March 2005.

International Relations: The Government of Zimbabwe (GOZ) continues to keep the focus on the issue of land redistribution, thereby shifting the attention away from the conduct of the 2002 presidential election, human rights abuses, and the undermining of the rule of law and democracy. The bottom line is that the GOZ has been able to thwart the development of an effective international consensus against it.

Economic Environment: The Government continues to exert greater control over the economy rather than address the causes of the current problems: the political crisis, which undermines investor confidence; lax fiscal and monetary policies, which have resulted in, *inter alia*, 600% inflation; willingness to allow the currency to become overvalued; and the land reform program, which has undermined food production and foreign exchange-earning exports.

Zimbabwe’s declining economic activity is expected to continue because of the GOZ’s incoherent economic policy, along with the disruptions caused by the rapid implementation of the land reform program and the adverse impacts of drought and HIV and AIDS. Nonetheless, some stability has returned to the local currency and the availability of foreign exchange. However, hyperinflation is a real possibility, and the country will continue to face a major foreign exchange shortage. Food wise, substantial maize imports will be required to offset anticipated shortfalls in domestic production.

HIV and AIDS Environment: While the epidemic rages on, there are some prominent national aspects worth noting. Since 2000, the GOZ has its National AIDS Trust Fund (through an AIDS levy) to support AIDS prevention and treatment initiatives, and they established in 1999 the National AIDS Council (NAC) through an act of Parliament. Additionally, there is a National AIDS Policy in place, although discussions are currently underway within NAC to revise the Policy. Finally, just this month, the GOZ hosted the first ever National HIV and AIDS



Conference during which President Mugabe admitted to the delegates that the AIDS pandemic also had affected his extended family.

With this macro-level backdrop, the past and future implications for the Project's successful implementation and attainment of its objectives and goals have to be examined, both in terms of Futures and USAID as well as the envisioned beneficiaries, stakeholders and partners.

Futures: As with all organizations trying to deal with the rapidly changing and uncertain environment, Futures has been required to respond with great flexibility and perseverance. Nonetheless, the deteriorating situation has manifested itself in a number of ways.

- A decision was made by USAID in October 2003 to permit the denomination of local grants and cooperative agreements in U.S. Dollars instead of Zimbabwe Dollars. This had a significant impact on the ability of the 22 CSO grantees to more successfully undertake their activities.
- Nonetheless, the extraordinary inflation problems (and concomitant cash flow and availabilities issues) have made the program planning, budgeting and implementation process extremely difficult.
- The off-and-on availabilities of fuel for vehicles and very limited bank notes last year significantly inhibited the abilities of the Futures staff, partners and other support agencies to carry out their work. Substantial, otherwise productive time has been lost in trying to secure adequate and timely fuel supplies.
- This can also be said for the significant lost time due to staff of all agencies having to secure basic food supplies when and where they can.
- The major decline in the nation's economic and political climate has resulted in significant "brain drain" with the consequential effect that agencies are aggressively competing (read: outbidding) for the declining number of qualified Zimbabweans. Consequently, organizations such as Futures and the recipient CSOs may not be able to "compete" for the best possible personnel given their budget limitations. Staff turnover at the CSOs' level, as well as in the public and private sectors, has been significant.
- Along with the exodus of qualified Zimbabweans are, of course, the overwhelming losses due to AIDS and the further reduction in qualified staff for all organizations.
- Work "stay-aways" and the continuing political party polarizations further exacerbated the problems of productivity, organizational harmony, logistical mobility, etc.
- The deteriorating security and dramatic increase in crime in Zimbabwe has affected ZAPA staff members individually, as well as increased individual staff and project expenses for insurance and enhanced security.
- As discussed further below, there have been significant delays in the planned incremental obligations of USAID funds into the Futures contract. Consequently, the Project team convened special sessions in 2003 to discuss a variety of issues related to restructuring its program to achieve the desired or modified results with delayed, and potentially reduced, resources.
- Lastly, as addressed in the ZAPA management section and independent of the overall changing environment, it's important to note that the Project's implementation was also negatively affected by the protracted delay in the Chief of Party's arrival and, seemingly, inadequate contract commencement support, especially on-site training of local staff in the Futures' financial system and procedures.

USAID/Zimbabwe: The consequences of the above macro- and micro-level events, as well as changes within the U.S. Government (USG), have also had and will continue to have a profound impact on the Project's implementation and achievement of objectives.

- Most importantly, the growing international isolation of Zimbabwe – as well as attitudinal changes within some agencies of the USG towards Zimbabwe – has resulted in the significant reductions and delays in the availability of resources for the entire HIV and AIDS program and the Project. The prohibitions on and hurdles to be crossed for the annual provision of USAID resources resulted in:
  - 1) the delay in the planned FY 2003 obligation of \$1.15 million – which represents 48% of the total obligations to date of \$2.372 million – until the last days of the FY (it should be noted that before the obligation Futures/Washington actually advanced its own funds to the Harare office and charged headquarter support costs to its general overhead);
  - 2) the consequential serious impact on the planned level of effort by Futures, which resulted in their special planning sessions in 2003 and subsequent adjustments to their work plans;
  - 3) with 58% of the estimated 4-year life of the Project already elapsed, only 45% of the total contract amount of \$5,304,355 has been obligated within the Futures contract; and
  - 4) the anticipated FY 04 obligation of \$1.1 million will likely occur very late in the FY with possibly the same ripple effects as before.
- As with the majority of USAID program activities, the level of effort (and expenditures) always begins to wind down significantly during approximately the last year of implementation, so it's likely that the perceived shortage of funds may be more acute now than it appears, if indeed the Project does conclude as currently scheduled.
- As to the future, the current planned completion date of February 20, 2006 for the Futures contract appears to have been predicated on the fact that, at the time of the contract signing, USAID's Country Strategic Plan (CSP) was valid for the FY 2000-2005 period, i.e., ending on September 30, 2005. USAID's standard procedure is to have individual SO activities coincide with the validity period of their current CSP. However, based on a number of very sound reasons, USAID/Zimbabwe promulgated its new HIV/AIDS Strategy for FY 2003-2007 on September 1, 2003. Consequently, while not wanting to prejudice USAID's normal process of review and consideration before extending any activity – but advocating such an extension at this time – it's appropriate to note that such an extension could occur, both in terms of the Strategy's validity period as well as contractually, i.e., "The effective date of this contract is...and the estimated (emphasis added) completion date is four years thereafter" (see page 18 of the contract).
- While unnecessary herein to describe in detail the ongoing, USAID-driven internal and external reviews of reported financial accounting deficiencies and a possible financial irregularity within Futures/Zimbabwe, it is important to note that very substantial disruptions and lost productivity have resulted within both the Futures/Zimbabwe office and the USAID Mission. Although the initial external review findings on the reported financial irregularity were inconclusive, the USAID Mission still awaits a more comprehensive external audit of the entire Futures/Zimbabwe accounting system.

Partners, Stakeholders and Ultimate Beneficiaries: Obviously, many of the above macro- and micro-level points have had, and will continue to have, a direct impact on Project partners,

stakeholders and intended beneficiaries – the HIV-infected and -affected people of Zimbabwe. While a large number of these factors are not within the control of many of these organizations and people, there are other factors of concern for the partners and stakeholders.

- As learned through the extensive interview process, there has been a sense of competition between Futures and the recipient CSOs for the precious attention, resources and efforts of other stakeholders.
- Substantial and frequent turnover at various GOZ agencies, especially the Ministry of Health and NAC, have been very disruptive. Also, significant efforts are necessary to maintain channels of communication and adequate follow-up on expected actions, etc.
- While most potential partner organizations are very receptive to financial and technical assistance provided by donors, there is always their internal struggle to balance the objectives and required methodologies of the donors with their own respective agendas and *modus operandi*. Too often, the appeal and, now even more, the necessity of securing external funding can cause serious organizational problems and dilemmas. Unfortunately, CSOs may sometimes view the new financial resources as a supplement to their overall budgets rather than in support of a donor's stand-alone activity. This issue must always be addressed when considering the provision of assistance to local organizations.
- There's another form of competition also at play – the one between donors. While the overall level of donor assistance (whether it is external or internal) in Zimbabwe has dropped precipitously, there are still instances where the limited numbers of qualified local organizations are being stretched in a variety of directions, often because of the allure of external funding. As above, this can cause fundamental problems for the organization and seriously impact the individual objectives of the donor.

In summary, it is clearly evident that the “environmental” changes and altered circumstances during the Project's relatively short life have been very significant and have reduced its expected performance, as noted in the sections below. However, at this mid-point juncture, it can be said that there are still opportunities for achieving the desired ends, which hopefully can be enhanced by implementing the Team's recommendations.

## **B. ZAPA Project Strategy**

The purpose of the ZAPA Project is to enhance the capacity of institutions to formulate, advocate, and implement for improved HIV and AIDS policies (see Annex 4). In summary, the Project purpose was seen to be carried out through six project objectives that encouraged a two-pronged approach. This approach mandated selected CSOs, faith-based organizations (FBO) and the media to advocate for more effective policies, and the workplace and the public sector to respond to this advocacy. It was formulated that this two-pronged approach would break the silence around the issues of HIV and AIDS, and mobilize communities to advocate for better policies that recognize their rights to protection under effective and implementable policies at national level and at the level of workplaces. The five programmatic themes selected by USAID to focus on were: speaking out and reducing stigma, women's empowerment, reproductive health, youth, and children affected by HIV and AIDS.

### **1. Project's Relevance**

The importance of policies and a legal framework as a first level of intervention cannot be marginalized. Laws and policies serve the important purpose of regulating behavior and advising constituents of their rights. Certainly, Futures has made inroads in that they are considered by partners as being one of the few organizations that have attempted to work at the policy level. However, the utility of these laws and policies are determined by how accessible these rights are to the constituents. Are constituents aware of their rights within a given policy framework? Do they understand the policy? With respect to the relevance of the ZAPA Project, perhaps this two-pronged approach has served to allow more rhetoric around HIV and AIDS and reduce stigma. As one CSO partner said, *“Yes, people are actually opening up; there have been many steamy debates on stigma which is very positive.”*

This is a very important first step. The stigma and shame of being infected has sent the virus underground. However, the question is whether policy formulation is a priority for a population that has been ravaged by the virus. Are policies offering hope to a nation that has seen whole families, colleagues and friends disappear quietly? Perhaps it is a beginning. It is now time to develop interventions that not only address policy and speaking out but also instill some hope for the people who speak out. This issue needs to be addressed with the careful and collaborative selection of issues within the thematic areas. The relevance of the Project cannot be refuted, the question now is to have a focus that is pertinent and has maximum impact.

## **2. Project Design, Potential Impact, Programmatic Themes and Sectoral Approach**

The next section addresses all four issues above as they are linked to each other and the Project design. The design called for selected CSOs, FBOs, media, and private and public sector organizations to implement their project objectives. The 22 organizations selected by Futures carried out activities independently of each other within specific theme areas. There was a civil society program, a faith-based program, and a public sector program – all very important players and compulsory to any effective intervention – but these programs were coordinated by staff at the Project office, specifically to deal with each program in isolation. This is an area that requires rethinking and adjustment. The following specific issues should be considered during the upcoming refinement of the Project:

### **a. Fragmentation of Program Activities**

Maximum impact certainly requires intervention with all sectors simultaneously. Isolation of the different tenets of the program from each other may not have been as productive as anticipated. The fight against HIV and AIDS requires a coordinated approach with all the players working together. Very important linkages are established between programs and with effective coordination, and partners soon clarify their roles and linkages between activities that avoid duplication and save resources.

### **b. Levels of Intervention**

Once you have all the possible players represented in your group, the next question is: are we intervening at all programmatic levels simultaneously? Interventions should be addressed at the level of laws and policies, as well as the structures that implement these policies and the recipients of these policies. Of the 14 CSO partners interviewed, twelve were working at the level of communities and conducting awareness campaigns and a little advocacy. Two partners and Futures themselves were engaging at the level of parliamentarians and policy makers. One

partner organization, which is a network of CSO organizations, has been engaged in mainstreaming the issue of HIV and AIDS in all programs. Thus, the major thrust of the work has been at the community level. There has been little engagement with the structures that implement these policies. Although it was the mandate of Futures to engage the National Aids Council (NAC) as the custodian of the national policy, this has not materialized because of noted issues with both parties. The rights and benefits of constituents outlined in the policy have not filtered down to the level of communities. As one Futures officer said, *“We had wanted to work with and build up the capacities of NAC officials to simplify and disseminate the HIV and AIDS Policy to people so that they realize their entitlements and rights under the policy.”*

In any development program that is working with all players at multiple levels, it is important that the partnership represents a fine balance of prevention programs, treatment programs, programs that intervene with institutional structures, and programs that intervene at the level of policy makers. The absence of partners advocating for treatment and better access to antiretrovirals (ARVs) is glaring in this review. A public sector partner in the following comment also reflects this view: *“...however, one of the issues that keep coming up is treatment and access to treatment.”* Furthermore, a CSO partner stated *“Access to ARVs should have been one of the important issues for ZAPA because domestic workers and such cannot afford ARVs.”* (Note: At the time of the Project’s design, the provision of ARVs was not a possibility; however, USAID is now exploring such a program of assistance).

These comments by an official of the NAC sum it up: *“For the year 2004, our priority is access to treatment. We have allocated Z\$10 billion for ARVs and we have an additional allocation by donors of Z\$7 billion. A local company is producing some but cannot cope. At present, we estimate that 250,000 people are in dire need of treatment but only 10,000 are receiving any. We have money to buy ARVs but our problem is foreign currency. The Reserve Bank has other priorities, such as electricity and petrol.”*

### **c. Ethical Considerations**

Related to the issue of access to treatment and the problems outlined above in accessing ARVs, it is important to weigh the ethical considerations of advocating and encouraging speaking out and reducing the stigma surrounding HIV and AIDS, and not offering any hope for those who have the courage to speak out. The inclusion of partners advocating for treatment is an important oversight and perhaps even providing support to this/these partner(s) to set up a pilot project for those who speak out should be considered. As one public sector partner stated: *“It would have been good to have a pilot treatment program to follow up on the visit of the Members of Parliament (MPs) to the voluntary testing and counseling (VCT) Centre - this would have been a natural extension.”* (Note: As the MP testing only took place in May of this year, this recommendation should be considered by the Futures team in consultation with USAID.)

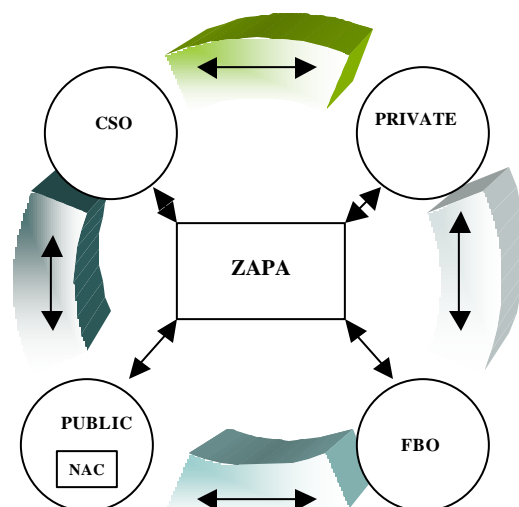
### **d. Principles of Partnership**

To build a network that represents different levels of interventions, it is important to have a clear definition of roles so that there are maximum impacts at all levels. This requires a clear identification of issues, roles, good communication, and resource division. For example, a CSO partner working with MPs was undermined by the Project that was also engaging them and paying more attractive allowances. Clear, agreed-on partnership principles would result in a

clear division of roles, fair division of resources, and non-competitive linkages between programs with multilevel interventions. The latter would avoid the perception of one CSO partner: “ZAPA needs to be more supportive of local initiatives, not competing with them....”

### Recommendations:

1. With the direct involvement of USAID, Futures should consider changing the specific operational thrust of the Project’s design to reflect the changing HIV and AIDS environment, the new opportunities for care and support, and identified high priorities for intervention. Therefore, given the above issues, the following graphic presents the recommended change to the Project’s operational structure in order to maximize impact at all levels. Although more than one advocacy network may be possible in the future, given the limits of time and resources, one network of partners is recommended which would include CSOs, FBOs, and the private and the public sectors. This will allow partners to develop their interventions at multi-levels, and thereby identify the most important issues for a coordinated approach. In this way, if a partner working at a community level is advocating for treatment for persons living with HIV, this issue will be carried through to the level of institutions and policy makers. For example, advocacy issues could be directed to support the NAC to lobby the Reserve Bank for allocation of foreign currency for ARVs. The possible structure is presented below.



*Possible Advocacy Network Design*

This integration of the different sectors into one coordinated advocacy network will assist to define roles, ensure a large degree of transparency, and set the stage for a maximum impact and coordinated response to mitigating HIV and AIDS. It will enhance the overall “advocacy network” wherein the partners from the different sectors will work together around mutually accepted themes and issues. The role of Futures would move to building this network that represents multi-level interventions with respect to chosen issues where they would be advisors and facilitators. Certainly, the time has arrived to place emphasis on implementation of policies, both at national level and at the level of organizations and workplaces. ZAPA Project partners have facilitated the formulation of an impressive number of workplace policies. It is time to test the accessibility of the rights bestowed in these policies to the relevant audiences. The Parliament’s Portfolio Committee on Health and Child Welfare has already begun investigating

the structures that were put in place to implement the National AIDS Policy and identifying obstacles to implementation – an important process to support in the investigative process and the remedies.

2. Futures should consider reexamining and refocusing their policy and advocacy issues, and the ultimate decisions should be reached in a participatory manner with all players and stakeholders. The five programmatic themes that were used as a framework to select advocacy issues are: youth, children affected by HIV and AIDS, women's empowerment, speaking out and care. The former three themes are really your consumers or recipients that are crosscutting to a number of issues. The latter two are important issues and continuity of these two issues should be seriously considered. Consultation with partners and stakeholders will assist to identify pertinent issues that require advocacy and policy adjustments. During this review, stakeholders identified numerous issues:

- Confidentiality versus human rights – the Sexual Offences Act criminalizes willful transmission, but human rights law upholds the issue of confidentiality.
- Automatic provision of ARVs for mothers who have participated in taking drugs to minimize parent to child transmission (PCT).
- Continuity of free drugs for patients referred for home-based care from hospitals.
- The provision of nutritional supplements as well as drugs for those living with HIV and AIDS.
- Prioritizing foreign currency to acquire drugs.
- Taking relevant laws and policies within each thematic area to the community level.

(Note: Suggested actions related to the recommendations above and all of those in the following sections are presented summarily in section IV and Annex 7.)

### **3. Project's Strategic Shifts to Meet the Changing Environment**

As demonstrated above, the challenging environment faced by the Futures team, coupled with the very nature of this pioneering advocacy effort, has demanded that the Project and Futures team be flexible enough to adjust to best achieve the desired objectives. Consequently, when faced with difficulties in the implementation of the specified emphasis on reproductive health – i.e., there were issues with the appropriate GOZ agency and Washington-imposed constraints on USAID's engagement with GOZ agencies – the Futures team advocated for and received concurrence from USAID to drop their reproductive health focus. Although that change was never formalized through a contract amendment, it should be included in the anticipated omnibus contract amendment resulting from some of the recommended changes contained herein.

Also, as supported by the Review Team, the Futures team is now re-examining the nature and magnitude of their earlier decision to focus on supporting an essential advocacy network instead of a second round of grants to individual and diverse CSOs. Indeed, based on the earlier discussions on the Review Team's findings, the Futures team will be deferring on the award of any new grants resulting from the responses to their recent Request for Applications (RFA) in order to accommodate some suggested revisions.

What these examples demonstrate, as well as the “environmental” hurdles they jumped since Project inception, is that Futures has the right mentality and capacity to adjust strategically to the

requirements of the day. With this report's recommendations, the Futures team will again be challenged to adjust strategically to meet the most pressing needs of HIV and AIDS advocacy and the expectation of USAID – the Futures team appears willing to take on that challenge.

#### **4. Importance of Project in Complementing USAID's HIV and AIDS Portfolio**

As clearly demonstrated through the interviews and focus group discussion, there is absolute certainty over the importance the Project plays in the overall national and international effort to combat the epidemic and assist those infected or affected by it. The achieved leadership role of the Project in the advocacy and policy areas is undeniable, yet more can be done to enhance that role.

On the other hand, however, USAID is faced with the dilemma of spreading itself too thin – in the face of declining resources – as it seeks to explore and support different ways by which to most effectively address the epidemic. With those related constraints in mind, it is still clearly evident to the Review Team that USAID should remain engaged on this front. As discussed with USAID's SO team members, the complementarity of the Project to the rest of USAID's HIV and AIDS portfolio is also undeniable. A good example is the natural linkage between promoting the “breaking of the silence” through the Project and other efforts with the provision of care and treatment for those who “come out.”

As “encouraging fidelity” to combat the epidemic continues to grow in prominence, so too does the necessity for USAID to continue utilizing the Project as a means to be on the forefront of advocating behavior change, policy reform, and the resolution of critical issues hindering the reversal of the epidemic in Zimbabwe. In sum, while it is essential for USAID to address the epidemic through the VCT, treatment and care fronts, there's also a need for the Mission to support efforts that are “ahead of the curve.”

### **C. Contractor Performance**

#### **1. Project Results**

##### **a. Overall Achievements to Date**

As documented throughout this review, the Futures team has achieved much in a relatively short period of time on a number of different fronts, while operating in a difficult implementation environment. In summary, the following are some of the important achievements:

- Completion of various baseline and analytical studies as preludes to the award of grants to CSOs and the identification of areas of opportunity.
- Provision of 22 grants to CSOs for periods of 12 to 15 months for advocating diverse HIV and AIDS issues including: the promotion of civil rights for people living with the disease; children's rights; women's and girl's reproductive health rights; promotion of male responsibility; and implementation and mainstreaming of the National AIDS Policy among NGOs.
- Co-sponsoring and direct support leading up to the promulgation of the National Plan of Action for Orphans and Vulnerable Children.
- Heightening the prominence of faith-based organizations' creation and expansion of effective HIV and AIDS prevention and control initiatives centered on speaking out and reducing stigma.
- Genesis of the growing spirit of an advocacy network among partners and stakeholders.



## **b. Relevance and Usefulness of Special Studies**

As part of its overall mix of activities, the Futures team utilized special studies to address the specific foci of the Project. The majority of these studies served as the analytical basis for the initiation of primary Project activities or as progress assessment tools. Futures' followed each study with workshops, interviews, or conferences to disseminate findings among the stakeholders. Specifically, the following six studies have been or are currently being undertaken:

- Individual baseline studies (on institutional capacities to carry out advocacy and policy development) on the eventual 22 CSO grantees;
- A situational analysis to determine: the current level of advocacy and policy development within the greater civil society; how well advocacy and policy development is understood by CSOs; and constraints encountered by CSOs;
- An assessment of the ability of faith leaders to speak out about HIV and AIDS and reduce stigma in their congregations;
- A situational analysis on the use and availability of HIV and AIDS information by media professionals;
- A review of applicable policies and legislation; and
- An ongoing advocacy capacity development assessment of the 22 CSO grantees.

In sum, while the studies have been costly, at times, and with mixed results in terms of quality and ultimate impacts, there will continue to be a need for such analytical investigations in the future, e.g., baseline capacity assessments of new grant recipients, potential focus areas, and impact assessments.

Recommendations: Futures should explore the need for additional studies. While having to be ever mindful of costs, and in addition to other essential studies like the above, the Futures team should explore further its idea for a study of the National AIDS Policy with recommended actions and revisions. Indeed, the Review Team was advised that the National AIDS Council (NAC) is currently discussing such an effort, so the time is right for possible Project assistance. Obviously, this would necessitate substantial concurrence, coordination and collaboration, but the potential returns for the Project, USAID and the nation are substantial. Additionally, as noted in Futures FY 2003 Annual Report, their tentative plan to conduct a "survey to measure USAID's context indicator on stigma" should be discussed and resolved. Finally, in the appropriate instances, reports should be printed for greater circulation.

## **c. Role of the Auxilia Chimusoro Award**

The Project contract specifically calls for Futures to finance and manage the USAID-initiated Auxilia Chimusoro Award (for excellence in media coverage on the HIV and AIDS epidemic), and at least three other awards of similar nature, including one each to an individual, a business/private sector entity, and a CSO. In fact, the Futures' Final Revised Proposal specifically detailed their plans and timing for those three new awards, as well as the Chimusoro Award.

In April 2003, Futures managed the Third Annual Chimusoro Awards Program ceremony, which coincided with the formal ZAPA Project launch. There were five recipients of an award – all entitled Auxilia Chimusoro Awards – although none of the following were for excellence in

media coverage: a community-based project providing hospice and orphan care; a bank for its contributions to HIV and AIDS projects; a founding member of a resource project for people living positively with AIDS; a camp for its work with youth; and a USAID-supported American organization for its nationwide VCT program.

There have not been any awards since then, however, for two principal reasons. First, the Futures team deferred on the next round of awards principally because of the financial constraints resulting from the delayed USAID obligation, which ultimately caused them to recommend the dropping of the awards program. And, second, once USAID rejected the recommendation, Futures has deliberately deferred the program until after the National HIV and AIDS Conference and the dissolution of the Parliament – so that there will be adequate press coverage. Unfortunately, there is also a problem with the continuation of the Award, as it is now entitled, due to issues raised by family members of the late Auxilia. The Futures team is expecting to directly address and resolve those issues soon after the National Conference, and anticipates having an award for media coverage as well as the others when the time comes.

It is very evident that USAID continues to greatly value this awards mechanism as one of a number of important tools for affecting desired leadership and behavioral reforms through public recognition and national publicity, and it wants to see the timely resumption of the awards program.

Recommendations: Futures needs to take the necessary actions to conduct as soon as possible another awards program. They should also consider increasing the frequency of the awards (i.e., more than once a year) as a way to elevate and sustain the profile of the joint USAID/Futures program and thereby enhance the program's impacts. Given ongoing financial constraints, however, consideration should be given to reducing the cash award amount and the costs associated with conducting the ceremony – the last one being very expensive. If need be, the Chimusoro Award should be renamed so as not to further delay the utilization of this important and well recognized promotional tool. As part of the anticipated joint refocusing and prioritization exercises, USAID and Futures should discuss and agree upon ways to achieve the prompt resumption of the awards program, while holding down the costs as much as possible. The contract may have to be amended to reflect a change in the basis for the Award as well as any other substantive changes resulting from the discussions (see section C.3(e)(1) of the contract).

#### **d. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan**

In accordance with their contract and incorporated Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP), the Futures team is providing performance planning and monitoring reports to USAID in accordance with requested submission dates. The PMP is providing Futures with useful performance information to assist in making management decisions and to evaluate the success of the Project in attaining its objectives. The Mission-supported technical assistance by an IBM team in late 2002 and mid-2003 helped Futures with refining various aspects of their PMP.

Although the Futures team is tracking their PMP's nine Performance Indicators for evaluating progress, only four of them are reported to USAID for the Mission's overall PMP, as updated September 15, 2003. In USAID's FY 2004 Annual Report, however, none of the Futures'

indicators were included in the Report. Consequently, given that substantial implementation has occurred and experience gained from the collection and actual utility of the performance data, a reassessment of the utility of all nine indicators needs to occur in the very near future. The bottom line must be to determine the appropriateness/utility of the indicators in the context of the costs/benefits of obtaining and reporting on such information. It appears that Futures and USAID's SO team must now make some hard "value judgments."

Recommendations: The Project's indicators should be revised and reduced in the face of coming strategic changes. In light of the Team's findings regarding the 22 CSO grantees' degrees of sustainable advocacy capacities (also currently being assessed by a contractor) – and in anticipation of the eventual second round of grants – special consideration should be given very soon to revising and/or eliminating some of the four indicators specifically focused on CSOs. Additionally, subject to anticipated "concentrate and focus" efforts by USAID and Futures, there may be good reason to also modify/tighten up the broad indicator "Number of organizations involved in HIV/AIDS advocacy," one of USAID's four IR 2 indicators. Following the joint review of this document and the consequential plan of action, Futures and USAID should reach a consensus on appropriate modifications to the indicators. Any substantive modifications, however, will need to be included in the anticipated amendment to the Futures contract. As with any such revisions, the Regional Contracting Officer (RCO/Botswana) should be engaged early in this process.

## **2. Public Sector Program**

### **a. Impact on HIV and AIDS-Related Policy and Policy Development in the Public Sector**

The impact of the collaboration with other stakeholders in terms of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) has been very impressive. The Project co-sponsored a national conference on OVC that attracted 300 stakeholders and has resulted in a National Plan of Action in consultation with the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, and the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare. Stakeholders have been clear that the contribution the Futures team made to this process has been overwhelming.

The Project has made major inroads in engaging the two Parliamentary Portfolio Committees that deal with Health and Child Welfare, and Gender, Development, Youth and Employment Creation. The latter Committee has conducted two hearings with support from Futures with respect to the Domestic Violence Bill. With respect to the Portfolio Committee on Health and Child Welfare, the Project has been a major sponsor of their activities. Some of the activities that have been conducted in collaboration with ZAPA have been public hearings with respect to the Health Management Bill. This process was cut short because the Government withdrew the Bill. Other activities have included the Committee volunteering to go for counseling and testing which received press coverage not only locally but also within the region. The process was videotaped and viewed before the Speaker of the House, Parliamentarians, staff and civil society groups working in the area of HIV and AIDS. The Committee also prepared a report that was tabled before Parliament and resulted in a very lively debate in the House. An additional activity was the review of the District AIDS Committees (DACs). The Committee noticed anomalies in the structures and made recommendations for change. The Committee also has plans to review the NAC Act and have already agreed on the broad outlines for change. This certainly shows a very intense collaboration between the Committees and the Project. The fact that the HIV and

AIDS national policy is on the agenda for review and that implementation structures have been investigated are very positive results.

Again, concern must be raised about the role of Futures within this program. One stakeholder stated that there was not sufficient consultation by Futures with other partners working at Parliament. Thus, there was duplication of activities that served more to enhance the image of particular Parliamentarians within their constituencies rather than enhance knowledge of particular policies or Bills. *“Futures should have consulted us first. They supported hearings that were held unnecessarily. Sometimes they were just funding a politician’s public image.”*

Secondly, stakeholders felt that there was not enough clarity within the Futures team about their roles, and that Futures began by providing financial assistance to partners to engage Parliament but then began working directly with Parliament as well. Stakeholders felt that the Project should be divorced from direct ground advocacy issues and instead support the direct advocacy efforts of its partners. Also, an issue over adequate follow up with Parliamentarians was expressed, and it was felt that future efforts should ensure that recipients are aware that certain tangible results are expected from them with respect to policy changes. An underlying positive note has been the value of the legal analysis workshops that were held to improve the skills of the members of the two Committees. This was a very effective capacity-development process that impacted very positively on the process at the public hearings. This is a lesson that should be repeated following the next elections which will likely result in changes in the Committees, depending on who is reelected. However, whether other public sector entities have been engaged sufficiently is not so apparent. Even the staff at Parliament had the following to say: *“Despite the fact that Government has declared HIV and AIDS a national disaster, this has not been reflected in their provisions to mitigate. Last year, during the budget debate, the health and defense budget had to be deferred because it was not considered sufficient. It is very important to engage Government to allocate more time, effort and resources.”*

## **b. Collaboration with Public Sector Entities**

Collaboration with the NAC has not been successful with both parties blaming each other for this lack of co-operation. Some of the issues highlighted during discussions with Futures staff were: inclusivity (always include everyone who shows an interest or is strategic, e.g., NAC, so that they do not place obstacles in your way later), consultation, transparency, negotiation, mutual respect, shared responsibility, learning together, ownership and commitment.

The collaborative link has to be established to make certain that the structural changes recommended are implemented, such as the changes recommended by Parliament to make the DACs more effective. In addition, the inclusion of the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare as a very strategic stakeholder should be considered. Finally, this is an advocacy and policy project and there is a very obvious place in the group of stakeholders of the Ministry of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs.

Recommendation: Futures needs to ensure that they more systematically collaborate with public sector entities. The most obvious way to achieve this end will be through the proposed Advocacy Design Network presented above, or some variation on that theme. Productive

collaboration will only occur when all parties have acquired a sense of “ownership” in the program, its objectives, and methodologies. Given past collaboration problems with the public sector agencies, Futures will need to go the “extra mile” to bridge the communication and institutional commitment gaps.

### **3. CSO Sector Program**

#### **a. Scope of the Contract**

A key element of USAID’s HIV and AIDS Strategic Objective is to “enhance the capacity of institutions to formulate, advocate for, and implement improved HIV and AIDS policies” (Intermediate Result-IR-2), as well as to create an effective interface between public and private institutions for the formulation of more effective HIV and AIDS policies. What is generally referred to as the “CSO sector” in the ZAPA Project are the broad-based advocacy initiatives targeted at policy, legislative and social transformation and achieved through:

- The CSOs, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and faith-based organizations the provision of small grants, training and technical assistance by the Project to enable them to formulate, advocate for, and implement improved HIV and AIDS policies.
- Provision of funding for specific one-time initiatives to either faith-based or other community groups that focus on HIV and AIDS prevention and impact mitigation.
- Provision of technical and resource assistance by the ZAPA team to facilitate the development of HIV and AIDS workplace policies in both the private and public sectors.

Futures designed a program encompassing the following advocacy activities in order to meet IR 2: a small grants program in partnership with local CSO partners addressing the thematic areas of youth, children affected by AIDS, women’s empowerment, speaking out, and reducing stigma and discrimination as well as care. The program also provided support for religious communities and other community groups to speak out on HIV and AIDS and thereby reduce the stigma and discrimination, which some believe actually results in increased HIV transmission. Furthermore, the Project was designed to promote the development of workplace HIV and AIDS policies.

#### **b. CSO Sector Program Activities Conducted**

Futures has awarded and managed small grants to 22 partners for policy advocacy initiatives, provided financial and technical assistance to the partners at workshops and on a one-on-one basis, and provided support for the development of workplace HIV and AIDS policies through some partners, as well as directly with private sector corporate entities. It has also facilitated the “speaking out” initiatives by religious groups through, inter alia, the provision of funds, support for and facilitating their training on HIV and AIDS information, basic counseling skills, and policy development. In addition, ZAPA developed an information and education campaign that involved training of journalists on responsible reporting on issues of HIV and AIDS, as well as supporting the 2003 National “Journalists Awards.”

The project design was influenced in part by baseline/special studies that were conducted in these broad areas, namely:

- Situation Analysis on Policy and Advocacy in Zimbabwe (September 2002-February 2003)
- Faith-based organizations: Speaking Out Baseline Survey

- Situational Analysis of Information Available to Media Professionals in Zimbabwe (December 2002-June 2003)

### **c. Project Achievements and Impacts**

The CSO sector program has generally maintained the focus delineated by the Project document, and has scored successes particularly in the formulation and acceptance of HIV and AIDS workplace policies, as well as supporting the development of a National Plan of Action by ZAPA for the implementation of the Orphan Care Policy for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) who are mainly children affected by AIDS. One of the Project's CSO partners successfully engaged policy makers, resulting in the increase in distribution of the drug Nevirapine to prevent parent to child transmission of HIV among expectant mothers. (Note: While the National Plan of Action is certainly a public sector achievement, it is equally important to acknowledge that most of the small grants partners were involved at the national conference and in the development of the Plan.)

The Project has also laid the ground work for the commendable, opportune, and timely involvement of faith-based organizations to mitigate the HIV and AIDS pandemic, as well as prevent further transmission through awareness raising activities that have resulted in the formulation of HIV and AIDS church policies, which are at various stages of development. This is very important because the religious sector wields significant influence over the Zimbabwean communities in its role as counselors with a large following that shapes moral behavior patterns and seeks to prevent HIV transmission. Overall, the program has taken disclosure of HIV and AIDS status as a preventive strategy to a higher level in the private and public sectors, as well as increased awareness of HIV and AIDS information to communities.

There are, however, areas that require strengthening in the next phase of implementation so that the goal of the Project can be realized and the effectiveness and impact of implementation is enhanced. These pertinent mid-term findings and recommendations for improved Project implementation are detailed below.

### **d. Small Grants Programme with CSO Partners: Enhancement of Capacity of Institutions to Formulate, Advocate for, and Implement Improved HIV and AIDS Policies**

While there have been a number of advocacy achievements, capacity building for advocacy for the formulation of improved HIV and AIDS policies remains a largely unmet need, and it is a critical element for the effective development of advocacy plans and strategies. Most of the partners, irrespective of their maturity or development stage, require systemic and basic training on advocacy for policy development and implementation. A random perusal of some of the partners' advocacy plans reflected that most of them focused on awareness raising and information, education and communication campaigns, instead of advocacy. The Futures team oriented the grantees on the development of their advocacy plans through the provision of guidelines and subsequently one-on-one assistance. Two workshops were conducted with partners; the first was on proposal writing, and the second on sharing partners' experiences in advocacy. While workshops provide a platform for focused learning and discussion on specific issues, they need to be complemented by the provision of specific one-on-one technical assistance.

Recommendations: Futures should fine tune the advocacy capacity-building program and provide training materials on advocacy. This could include the process of identifying an issue, contextual analysis, constituency building, research methods, and its importance in advocacy, project design and planning, gender analysis of issues and processes, development of alternative policy positions, as well as the role and development of information and education campaigns in advocacy. Aspects of specific emphasis can be determined by the results of the advocacy capacity assessments conducted for the partners from the previous grant cycle. Because advocacy is comprised of organized and targeted activities to influence policy and/or legislation in respect to a particular issue, the process requires a period of sufficiently long duration to make significant impact. Furthermore, formal capacity-building training sessions with the continued provision of individual training sessions provided on an ongoing basis should be considered.

#### **e. Provision of Program Support**

CSO partners interviewed generally commended technical assistance provided by Futures on financial reporting and management purposes at both the initial introductory workshop as well as periodically during compliance visits, though most partners cited late disbursement of funds delaying implementation of activities. The focus, however, during compliance visits tended to be on an “audit” of both financial and programmatic expenses and activities. This, therefore, rendered the visits inappropriate for the provision of program support and technical assistance. As one CSO partner representative stated: *“Interaction with ZAPA was quite asymmetrical. It was not really a partnership but more of a donor-recipient relationship and they would only call when requesting for reports.”*

Recommendations: Futures should strengthen the partnership with grantees, through the provision of technical support and guidance on advocacy on a consistent and regular basis. This should include the conduct of planned quarterly program support visits held separately from the conventional compliance visits, at which time substantive discussions are held on implementation activities, challenges and opportunities, as well as reorientation of advocacy plans, as deemed appropriate. This might require adapting the present program visits’ framework. It is also recommended that members of the Futures team provide technical advice and oversight to grantees and make a deliberate attempt to facilitate, when and where appropriate, the partners’ advocacy campaigns. Generally, communication between Futures and the grantees should be strengthened.

#### **f. Integration of and Interface between the Advocacy Program and Futures’ Other Programs Involving the Media and the Public Sector**

The review process revealed that Futures’ performance of its other activities designed to garner the support of the media for the dissemination of and ethical reporting on HIV and AIDS issues was perceived by most CSO partners as being in competition with, and not complementary to, their own advocacy efforts. The competitive perception arose due to a lack of full and open communication, and the resultant vying for an audiences’ attention, e.g., parliamentarians being supportive of a partner’s initiative as well as a direct Futures-managed activity. Consequently, this distorted the Project’s role as an advisor and process facilitator and made it appear to be more one of an implementer, contradicting its mandate. Furthermore, at CSO partner level, while there was clearly some collaboration among organizations involved in the workplace policy development, and those involved in the women’s empowerment themes, the relationships

were not formalized and networking was done on an *ad hoc* basis, not being planned, structured or strategic.

**Recommendations:** Futures should ensure that they serve as advisors and facilitators and, to the fullest extent possible, not implementers. There needs to be a clarification of the role of Futures, and the interface between its initiatives needs to be done with all partners. The improvement of communication and coordination between Futures and its partners needs to be addressed to avoid actual or perceived competing agendas. It is also recommended that there be a standardization of policies governing relationships with stakeholders, such as the payment of allowances to avoid unintended “competition.” (Note: While “competition” can be healthy in terms of bringing the best out of the Futures team and partner organizations, it must be collaboratively understood and managed to ensure the best possible outcomes). Consequently, the partners’ participation in the development or the distribution of Futures’ materials and publications to the media and the public sector can eliminate this perception and advance the Project’s goals. Similarly, the enhancement of skills for policy analysis and formulation initiatives provided by the Futures team’s policy development unit also ought to be provided to the partners to enable them to be more effective in their engagement of policy makers on HIV and AIDS policy issues. Finally, it is recommended that Futures continue to create platforms for greater collaborative effort between the partners themselves, e.g., workshops to share experiences, and developing partner-to-partner communication.

Futures should conduct a participatory planning process with its partners and stakeholders at the inception of the next phase of the program, as well as enhance communication with partners on the conduct of Futures’ other activities with the aim of increasing partners’ involvement in platforms created by the Project. If funds permit, ZAPA should consider developing a training package on policy analysis and formulation and conduct of training workshops with partners. In addition, they should provide technical assistance to grantees in developing appropriate media and communication strategies to advance their advocacy issues.

#### **g. Selection of CSO Partners**

The Project’s objective is the “enhancement” of the capacity of institutions to formulate and advocate for improved HIV and AIDS policies. During the first two years, partners supported by the Project were at different levels of development. There were, therefore, some partners with existing advocacy capacity and others without. In fact, some advocacy programs have ceased to exist with the close of the first round of grants. While it may be strategic to continue to work with some of these nascent partners – for reasons of their significant scope of influence, e.g., faith-based organizations, or potential impact, it may be unwise to fund other nascent CSOs without these strategic advantages. These are factors that will influence the sustainability and continuity of an advocacy campaign. Furthermore, most of the advocacy issues were centered on community-level impact and policy development, and not on national policies. While it is commendable for advocacy work to be grounded in communities in terms of both participation and benefit, it is also necessary to establish linkages with national policies and frameworks for resourcing and actual results based on the social commitments contained in national policies as well as work through the institutional levels that implement the policies.



Recommendation: Futures should revise its partner selection criteria to ensure that the representation is strategic to furthering the Project's overall direction. Specifically, Futures should select partners with an existing advocacy capacity that have the ability to continue advocacy after a grant, and with the potential for impact with a focus on thematic areas (such as care and mitigation) as opposed to special interest groups, e.g., women and OVCs.

#### **h. Private Sector – Workplace Policy Development: Provision of Technical Assistance by Futures Directly to the Private Sector**

In the first phase of the Project, the Futures team has been rendering direct technical assistance to the private sector for the development of HIV and AIDS workplace policies, in addition to supporting NGOs to provide similar services under its CSO sector program. Futures worked through two organizations that between themselves developed 21 HIV and AIDS workplace policies whilst the third one, an association for the civil service, developed a policy for the civil service sector.

##### Recommendations:

1. Futures should work with the private sector through its advocacy network.
2. With understood limitations, Futures should provide capacity building and technical assistance to network partners, as needed. Conversely, they should avoid providing technical support to their partners that could be mistakenly construed as attempting to run the operations. The focus should be on enabling their partners to develop policies and procedures, and successfully implement their programs.

#### **i. Faith-Based and Other Community Groups in Speaking Out and Reducing Stigma Initiatives**

Collaboration with the religious community is a strategically sound strategy for reducing the spread of HIV and AIDS. Through training workshops held with senior church pastors and leaders on how the church can speak openly about HIV and AIDS, and the provision of basic counseling skills and the development of HIV and AIDS church policies, awareness has been raised on the need for churches to speak out. These platforms and groundwork were provided to the Kadoma Ministers' Fraternal, Seventh Day Adventist Church, United Methodist Church (Bethsaida and Mabelreign congregations), Youthood, and the World Pentecostal Assembly.

Recommendations: Futures should design a clear follow-up strategy for faith-based organizations' advocacy activities. It is important that religious leaders not only speak out against religious practices that perpetuate the spread of HIV and AIDS, but that they also advocate for the codification of appropriate policies to prevent and mitigate the spread of the pandemic. It is also important to develop a follow-up strategy to monitor the implementation of policies, declarations or positions adopted within congregations as part of the churches' policies. It may be useful to work through existing religious networks to enhance effectiveness. This could be achieved through faith-based communities trained by the advocacy network following the agreed upon presence of the partners discussed earlier. This ultimately involves supporting the successful application of the communities' policies.

#### **j. Information, Education and Communication Campaigns**

The Futures team and some of the grantees have engaged the media for purposes of publicizing the program, their advocacy issues, and generally encouraging responsible reporting on issues of HIV and AIDS. The approach, however, has generally been fragmented and some of the Project's partners need capacity building to enable them to develop appropriate media and communication strategies. The focus has also tended to be on the use of the print media only.

##### Recommendations:

1. Futures should expand its media focus to providing its partners with the skills they need to effectively engage in use of the media and to develop their individual and collective media strategies, as well as to explore and effectively use the electronic media.
2. The Futures team needs to re-examine its approach to media, i.e., broaden the use of additional media forms, clearly determine whether and what capacity building should take place, and how it should be facilitating media activities.

#### **D. ZAPA Management and Organizational Structure**

The theme for the organizational development findings and recommendations, indeed the entire review process, is two-fold: 1) ZAPA's role in HIV and AIDS policy and advocacy, at all levels, with all players, should be one of advisor and process facilitator, not implementer; and 2) now is the appropriate time for the Futures team to take stock of what it has done, and to utilize the next three months revising and developing its strategic plan to effectively complete the remaining 20 months of its contract, if not otherwise extended.

##### **1. ZAPA Management and Staffing Structure/Systems**

ZAPA should be applauded for the getting the Project started even with the 9-month delay in hiring the Chief of Party (COP). It seems to have established some base networks through which to promote the Project and its perceived purposes. The administrative systems (i.e., filing, record-keeping, finalization and implementation of procedure and policy manuals, recording of grant proposals, and the tracking of PMP indicators) appear to be solid and for the most part efficient and well maintained. Reportedly, weekly staff meetings and bimonthly program meetings are held, allowing staff sufficient time to discuss administrative and programmatic issues collectively. Furthermore, despite a few major setbacks in late 2003 and early 2004 – the investigation into financial mismanagement allegations, which have yet to be substantiated, and the loss of major staff – the remaining staff appears to have managed to pull together and to begin to work as a team, exhibiting team commitment and team camaraderie, all essential to the effective running of a small project such as ZAPA. Staff self-assessments further support the team spirit prevailing at present. The staff should be commended for overcoming such demoralizing circumstances and for persevering.

Though these areas seem to be well covered, the Review Team did find three overarching issues of concern to the effective running of ZAPA and to the ultimate achievement of Project contractual obligations. Challenges to be addressed include: 1) strategic planning and direction, 2) project staffing and structure, and 3) staff skills and capabilities. These issues came up repeatedly in the interviews and are strongly supported by the staff self-assessments.

##### **a. Strategic Planning and Direction**

ZAPA appears to be unsure as to the overall direction and vision of the Project. Staff self-assessments support this conclusion of the staff's concern over and lack of confidence in the strategic direction of the Project. While they continue their work as started in 2002, they also appear to have taken on a very narrow view of what they do, why they do it, and how they do it. They detailed their project strategic objectives (see Annex 4) in January 2003, one full year after Project start-up. It seems that ZAPA strategic objectives flowed from their PMP indicators instead of the indicators developing out of and reflecting the project strategic objectives. This process appears to have only further promoted a narrow approach to and "a disconnect" in ZAPA's work. Though ZAPA conducted a strategic retreat in June 2003, there does not appear to have been any stocktaking of this strategy, only rephrasing and repeating of what was already in place and development of an unwieldy logframe. Since that time, ZAPA has apparently been busy with day-to-day "implementation" and ensuring compliance of Project activities, and it has not allowed sufficient time to question the soundness of its strategic direction and objectives. This lack of ongoing analysis appears to have led to a stalemate in activities, i.e. rotely completing activities with a focus on quantity and not quality. ZAPA has a pressing need to reexamine its direction and project design (see section IV for more specifics on strategy and design) and to reorient and refocus its goals and objectives.

Insufficient strategic planning also appears to have had an impact on ZAPA's ability to effectively manage its budget. With reduced and thereby less funds than expected and the poor Zimbabwean economic environment, ZAPA needed to be more detailed, mindful and deliberate in reviewing and revising its overall budget and its individual line items, such as training, consultants and workshops. In an ever-changing political and economic environment, it is even more essential to take stock on a regular basis and to revise plans and budgets to accommodate the changing needs of stakeholders, partners, and the Project.

#### Recommendations:

1. ZAPA team should redesign its strategic direction to provide a clear, detailed, and integrated focus (see section III.B for more specifics on project approach recommendations).
2. ZAPA should revise its overall budget to be in keeping with its redesigned strategic direction. This revision should include two versions: 1 with present contract funding only, and 1 with perceived essential increased funding.
3. ZAPA should review, at least quarterly, its strategic direction, project objectives and budget, and adapt as necessary.

#### **b. Project Structure and Staffing**

ZAPA's present project structure appears to have been delineated to match the composition and skills of the staff and not directly linked to the Project's goals and objectives. As well, positions have apparently been created for the existing staff based on their needs and not on the needs of the Project and its strategic direction. Organizational development practice shows that effective project structure and staffing need to be based on project requirements, strategic direction, and goals. If they are based on staff needs and qualifications, it will severely hinder project implementation. It is unclear if this is the way in which things were done at the start of the Project, but information appears to confirm that the trend was started early on and has continued to date. Given the present economic situation in Zimbabwe, it is understandable that staff has been kept on regardless of the need for or appropriateness of this staff, however, it is detrimental

of the stakeholders, the partners, the project and the other, more qualified ZAPA members to maintain this staffing.

Furthermore, the Team learned during the course of the review that the present COP has elected to leave the Project by the end of September 2004. It is, therefore, imperative that ZAPA take stock of its strategic objectives and needs to restructure and revise job descriptions. Also, Futures/Washington must utilize the next three months of redesign to hire a COP who can hit the ground running, and provide the solid management that will be needed to succeed in the relatively short time remaining, notwithstanding the possibility that the Project and Futures contract may be extended by an additional six months.

Recommendations:

1. ZAPA team should ensure that structure, staffing, and job descriptions clearly reflect the needs of the project and not the needs of the staff.
2. Futures should restructure and staff the Project team based on the newly designed strategic direction recommended above. Initial discussions were held and drafts developed with OD Specialist and Futures.
3. ZAPA team should rewrite staff job descriptions based on the needs of the newly designed strategic plan. Initial discussions were held and drafts developed with OD Specialist and Futures.
4. Futures/Washington should immediately begin recruitment for a new COP who can effectively manage and direct ZAPA's redesigned strategic goals and objectives.
5. Futures should request an extension, and present the revised strategic plan and budgets to USAID in the form of proposed contract amendments.

**c. Staff Skills and Capabilities**

Though the ZAPA Project got off to a very fast start, it would appear that staff was not necessarily hired because they came with the skills and capacities required to do their jobs effectively. Several staff, as well, reported in their self-assessments that they felt underutilized and insufficiently trained and oriented to do their jobs well. A few select staff members should be highly commended for the initiative they individually took to train themselves and bring themselves up to programmatic speed, such as the CSO Program Officer. However, it should have been the responsibility of Futures to hire staff more fully qualified and to have provided minimal staff development to bring them up-to-speed, as needed. For example, Futures eliminated what appears to have been an essential advocacy capacity-building training due to lack of funds. Had the staff been more experienced and skilled in budget reallocations, this might not have been necessary. Or, had it been determined funds were truly insufficient and the staff had been more experienced in advocacy capacity building, this training workshop might not have been what was eliminated from the budget. As stated in Section D.1.b. above, project implementation suffers when staffing is based on staff needs instead of project requirements.

Recommendations:

1. ZAPA team should conduct a complete skills assessment (see Annex 5 for the initial assessment matrix).
2. Based on the rewritten job descriptions and skills assessment, staff should be assigned to appropriate positions. See also Recommendation 1 in Section D.1.b. above.

3. When necessary and as a cost-effective project investment – i.e., the investment in staff development outweighs the time lost to replace this staff member with a more qualified staff person – Futures should provide updating and training to those staff as needed/appropriate.

#### **d. Equipment**

The Review Team also briefly examined the ZAPA office equipment assets and the potential needs. While Futures has done a fairly good job of equipping the Project and staff, several additional equipment pieces could make for a more efficient office. These purchases would require budget adjustments.

Recommendations: ZAPA should purchase the following necessary equipment:

- a. Computers for all staff. No staff should be sharing computers.
- b. One additional laser jet printer and, if color cartridges are available, one color desk jet printer.
- c. One digital camera and accompanying computer software.

## **2. Processes Developed for Grants Program Implementation**

### **a. Grant Awards**

ZAPA staff took on an ambitious task and seems to have followed ZAPA commitments through to the end of the initial grants phase. Though selection of the first set of 22 grantees appears to have been relatively methodical and criteria-based, it also seems to have been lacking in forethought as to what the Project could and should be doing with grantees – both in terms of what the grantees could achieve in one year and what ZAPA could build within these grantees in one year. Selection needed to take into consideration the maturity of the grantee's organizational capacity before selection and not after, and to pick grantees more capable of utilizing and implementing advocacy. Furthermore, more explicit consideration needed to be given to whether grantees already had the staff to handle an advocacy intervention. While it is required that grantees provide 25% of the total budget, the ZAPA team needs to reconsider whether and, if so, how much of the remaining 75% that ZAPA provides can include staff salaries, particularly if that salary is 100% for any one grantee staff person.

Recommendations: ZAPA should revise its selection criteria to include: 1) a clear reflection of its redesigned strategic goals and objectives; 2) an assessment of and selection by grantee organizational maturity, to the extent possible and appropriate; and 3) a careful examination of the percentage of grantee staff salary provided by the grantee and the percentage covered by Project funds.

### **b. Grants Management**

The ZAPA team seems to have worked regularly with grantee partners on their financial systems and their capacity to manage USAID funds. In the beginning, it seems ZAPA was unable to meet the needs of its partners due to the large number of grantees and to the training required by Project finance staff to be able to perform their jobs. Apparently, however, after an initial 4 to 5 months, finance staff, in particular the Grants Compliance Officer, was able to work regularly during compliance visits to assist grantees. Futures appear to have put in place, at the same time, systems and checks and balances for working with the grantees and working within the ZAPA office. Unfortunately, it appears even with the achievements of the finance unit to provide

appropriate support to grantees, grantees felt that they were given insufficient time and attention. As well, delays in getting these financial systems in place seem to have delayed grantee activities resulting in a few of the grantees being unable to complete their activities by grant end. While the Futures team chose to be ambitious in the beginning by granting 22 awards nationwide, it needed to regularly review what it was able to provide to its grantees and what it was unable to do as a result of its ambitiousness and readjust and inform grantees accordingly.

Recommendations:

1. Before awarding the next round of grants, the ZAPA team should ensure that all systems and procedures have been revised according to grantee feedback and finance unit experience.
2. ZAPA team should select only the number of grantees needed to achieve redesigned project goals and objectives, and what is manageable by the finance and program staff.

**c. Capacity-Building**

Most grantees reported that their financial skills and capacity improved during work with the Project team. This capacity building appears to have been achieved through a suitable mix of capacity-building methods, e.g., training, workshops, one-on-one support, and compliance visits. The potential for capacity building of grantees in advocacy was tremendous. Unfortunately, for reasons of reportedly excessive workload, budget reductions, and ZAPA team inexperience and lack of internal advocacy skills, little advocacy capacity building appears to have taken place. Many informational pieces were distributed, but it appears that little in the way of skills needed to effectively design, plan, manage, and implement an advocacy program/campaign was provided to grantees. Program compliance visits, which appear to have been conducted at the same time as grants compliance visits, seemingly amounted to counting the number of advocacy activities that had been completed and did not focus on advocacy building with the grantees. Utilizing compliance visits for programmatic and advocacy work – while easy to manage and to report back on for ZAPA staff – seems to have restricted grantees. Reportedly, they perceived these visits as controls and not as support or capacity building. Capacity building refers to developing and fostering skills required to carry out an activity that enables an organization to achieve its mission. And, while information is essential to capacity building, it is not a skill, it is a tool used to reinforce a skill. Furthermore, assessing compliance is not capacity building, and combining the two can make it a challenge for those involved to see capacity building taking place, even if it is occurring.

Some grantees expressed appreciation for the advocacy index tool as a piece that provided some guidance on what should be in place to support an advocacy program. However, they also expressed dissatisfaction and frustration on the usability of the tool, commenting that it was too complicated and cumbersome to be useful. Additionally, the Team noted that the advocacy tool reports on advocacy capacity issues statically, not progressively, as it only details where a grantee was and where they reportedly moved to, but does not reflect process, results and quality. As well, in comparing final report advocacy index scores on one grantee with the information the grantee provided to the Team, major discrepancies were noted, i.e., the final assessment rated this grantee very high, near perfect, in several categories, while the grantee itself expressed numerous challenges in these same areas, which it felt it had not overcome and had not received sufficient support from the Project. This inaccuracy could be due to improper data collection as well as too many issues being covered in the advocacy tool. While this was only one instance

and the Team was unable to review others as the reports were not yet available, it brings into question the validity of (1) the advocacy index tool as a means for monitoring and building capacity, (2) the methods used to collect baseline and final data, and (3) the process used both to analyze data and prepare reports.

Recommendations:

1. ZAPA team should combine grants compliance visits with program monitoring, but not with program capacity-building efforts.
2. ZAPA team should utilize proven mixes of capacity-building support, e.g., training, one-on-one and workshops.
3. ZAPA team should streamline and simplify its advocacy capacity-building approach to ensure it: 1) helps and accesses grantees progressively; 2) involves some grantee self-assessment; 3) takes into account the differing levels of advocacy maturity within the grantees; and 4) utilizes a building block approach so that grantees can refresh as needed and then begin to build on their existing capacity.
4. ZAPA team should reduce and refine the advocacy index tool to reflect Recommendation 3 above, i.e. should cover only essential elements needed for an effective advocacy program, should combine evidence-based capacity-building and monitoring, and should be administered following the building block approach – sections at a time, not all at once.
5. ZAPA should add an office staff member to the capacity assessment data collection team for baseline and final data collection to ensure quality control, and ZAPA should undertake the analysis of data collected and prepare appropriate reports.

**3. USAID's Management and Support to Meet the Needs of Futures and Project**

USAID/CTO appears to have been available in most instances to support and provide feedback to the Futures COP and selected ZAPA staff. It seems to have maintained its professionalism and support in the face of the challenging circumstances noted earlier. Regardless of this intermittent support, several ZAPA staff reportedly felt that USAID could have made itself more available even if just for occasional phone calls to ask questions. Furthermore, reportedly ZAPA finance staff received little support from the Controller's Office.

Recommendations:

1. Given the expected September departure of the COP as well as other delayed Project implementation factors, USAID should consider extending the Project until August 20, 2006 – this six-month extension being the most time permitted under the contract terms (see section F.2 of the contract and FAR clause 52.217-8, "Option to Extend Services," attached as Annex 6). This could have implications as well for the overall Project budget so that Futures will need to present a revised budget to USAID by early September to ensure that their needs will be met and that USAID can/will accommodate any budgetary readjustments. USAID should also look into the "emergency epidemic clause" as a means to extend the Project beyond the permitted six months, if so determined as an appropriate action.
2. USAID/Zimbabwe CTO should review the Project strategic direction quarterly with ZAPA COP and staff.
3. USAID/Zimbabwe Controller's Officer should provide ongoing support to ZAPA finance unit through regular contact.

#### **4. Futures/Washington Management and Support to Meet the Needs of Project**

As clearly delineated in their project proposal, Futures/Washington reportedly brought to the Project numerous systems, procedures, capacity-building methodologies, and existing Zimbabwean networks and policy and advocacy specialists, many having been trained already by Futures through other activities. Consequently, it is unclear why this expertise and financial, administrative, and programmatic backstopping does not appear to have been effectively accessed, provided, and maximized in the Project. While the Review Team acknowledges that some of this may be due to the very late arrival of the COP, it is still unclear (1) why Futures/Washington did not regularly provide more substantive, programmatic and financial support in the beginning, (2) why the COP did not request more assistance once on board, (3) why it took 2 years for a financial expert to come to Harare and help the finance unit structure and systematize procedures, and (4) why more substantive support was not provided when the CSO Specialist left mid-way through the first grant cycle, and immediately prior to an important advocacy capacity-building phase.

Recommendations: Futures/Washington, collaboratively with the Project office, should detail a staff development schedule in which Futures/Washington staff will provide updates, training (see above Recommendation #2 under Staff Skills and Capabilities), and skills-support as required and as reflected in the redesigned strategic goals and objectives.

#### **IV. Transition Plan of Action**

The attached Transition Plan (Annex 7) represents a proposed plan of action for the next three months, July-September 2004, which coincides with the remaining term of the COP. The steps to re-orient and refocus the strategic direction of the Project are presented in a “to do” order, with each recommendation building on and/or utilizing information detailed/activities completed in the recommendation before. Broad due dates have been given by months only so that Futures staff have the flexibility to adjust activities, as needed. Recommendations listed by month, however, do need to be completed in that month so that activities do not get behind, and all necessary pieces can be finished by the start of the Project’s next phase. Furthermore, this plan of action incorporates most recommendations from sections of this mid-term review – context, policy, advocacy, and organizational development feedback. For more details or specifics on the underlying issues, refer back to the relevant sections of the report.

#### **V. Conclusions**

What’s abundantly clear from this Mid-Term Review is that USAID had it right when they determined that an essential complement to its entire HIV and AIDS Strategic Objective was to also take on the epidemic through an advocacy and policy support and reform program. At this approximate mid-way point, the Futures team has achieved much in the way of providing direct assistance and support, as well as serving as a catalyst for HIV and AIDS advocacy and policy efforts in the nation. On the other hand, there were delays and missteps along the way that have been recognized by both parties, and there’s now a shared resolve – as evidenced during the Review Team’s debriefings – to utilize this review’s recommendations and suggested actions and methodologies to direct the way forward. That way forward, however, will require some further reflection, planning and hard decisions by Futures/Zimbabwe and Washington, with the participation and support of USAID.



By definition, the nature of this activity, coupled with the Zimbabwean operating environment, suggest that a pioneering activity like this requires substantial time to be successful in leaving behind sustainable impacts. It is for that reason that the Team recommends the earliest possible and feasible extension to the Project, subject to Futures submission of the supporting strategic planning documents, new organizational structure, etc.

The relevance of the Project cannot be contested. It has assisted in the provision of a voice to a nation that has struggled in the past to speak out about the overwhelming and devastating consequences of the HIV and AIDS pandemic. However, the Project must now move from community-level awareness and speaking out to a more structured, focused advocacy program to address the viability of the policies. Are the structures in place adequate to implement the policies? Or is there a void between the two levels of interventions – the policy level and the community level? In reality, is there a policy that bestows certain rights to communities and a community attempting to access these rights but is faced with implementation gaps?

With respect to project design, a more coordinated, multi-sectoral, multi-level approach has been recommended towards the formation of an advocacy network. This shift in paradigm will hopefully lead to a more equitable, transparent sharing of resources, and a collaborative selection of issues and workable action plans with all sectors contributing and complementing each other within their areas of expertise to achieve maximum impact. This will permit a more facilitative role for Futures with their partners, and set the stage where all sectors – public, private, faith-based and civil society – are cooperating to mitigate HIV and AIDS. The challenge facing the Futures staff will be to support the work of their partners to achieve their objectives.

With respect to the thematic areas, these too require focusing. Speaking out and care remain relevant issues, but the other three, namely youth, women and children, are too general to be really productive. They would be better considered as audiences that cut across all issues. It is recommended that the issue of care be extended to include access to ARVs, although the Review Team realizes that there are issues related to eligibility under USAID's new ARV program. For the Project, a greater involvement of people living with HIV and AIDS is a necessity.

The Project has pioneered the mitigation of HIV and AIDS prevention and mitigation through supporting advocacy initiatives for the development of appropriate policies. As was aptly stated by the outgoing Chief of Party: *"We have been literally hacking our way through uncharted territory."* Awareness raising on the need for policy development at grassroots, local leadership, and religious leaders' levels, as well as the private and public sectors at institutional levels, has been conducted. However, the link with the existing national policy framework and national level advocacy requires strengthening. The provision of skills and technical support to partners should be enhanced using an appropriate mix of methodologies ranging from individual training sessions, program support visits, workshops, and provision of technical assistance in advocacy initiatives. Furthermore, the Futures team needs to select its partners more strategically, and to coordinate their efforts around a focused advocacy issue that will achieve maximum impact as an intervention. Finally, they need to ensure that not only are appropriate policies developed, but that they are also fully implemented as a preventive and mitigating response to the HIV and AIDS pandemic.

While organizational development is the foundation on which a project stands, organizational clarity and strength hinge on a clear, well defined, focused project strategy. For the ZAPA Project to move ahead effectively and organizationally, it will need to first refine its remaining two-year project strategy. Based on this strategy, an appropriate project structure and staffing can be detailed, followed closely by a clear determination of staff skills, roles and responsibilities. With some additional time taken to update and adjust staff skills and reshuffle staff to ensure that the right people are in the right job, Futures will have shored up and solidified its foundation and be ready to move forward in facilitating the achievement of its project strategy. With this clear direction and a qualified and trained staff, Futures can: promote a solid advocacy network, build advocacy capacity in Zimbabwe, develop firm policy and advocacy leadership, facilitate a valuable small grants program, provide support for strategic activities and partnerships, and enable stakeholders and partners to work toward mitigating HIV and AIDS.

## **Annexes**

1. List of Interviewed Organizations
2. List of Reviewed Documents
3. Review Protocol
4. Project Objectives Summary
5. Staff Skills Matrix
6. FAR 52.217-8, Option to Extend Services
7. Proposed Transition Plan